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ABSTRACT

The Board of Regents of the University and Community Colleges System of Nevada (UCCSN) annually meets with campus administrators to articulate a systemwide vision and provide strategic directions. The 11 strategic directions identified during the February 1994 meeting were: (1) enhance academic planning and integrate planning and budgeting efforts systemwide; (2) emphasize undergraduate education and enhance the quality of undergraduate education; (3) selectively develop graduate education systemwide to serve the needs of Nevadans; (4) enhance access and retention in public postsecondary education; (5) recognize and reflect the diversity of society within UCCSN institutions; (6) emphasize and enhance collaborative programs within the system and between the UCCSN and other institutions and agencies; (7) provide a leadership role to promote economic health and growth of the state through its education, research, and service efforts; (8) continue UCCSN's commitment to evaluation and assessment to ensure accountability to the citizens of Nevada; (9) strive to obtain additional resources and ensure adequate reallocation of those resources; (10) recognize the importance of higher education in building common societal values and ethics, and seek ways to promote and enhance this role; and (11) promote both basic and applied research that meets the needs of the state, region, and nation. (Each strategic direction is accompanied by a series of specific objectives.) (KP)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As the University and Community College System of Nevada (UCCSN) prepares for the future, it is faced with many opportunities and challenges. Decisions regarding public higher education in Nevada must be based on a shared vision and common directions to ensure that we will meet these opportunities and challenges and provide a quality educational experience for Nevada's students.

The UCCSN Board of Regents meets annually with campus presidents, academic vice presidents, faculty senate chairs, and the Chancellor and his staff in a workshop session to articulate a System vision and to provide a framework for common directions throughout the UCCSN. The strategic directions and objectives established through this collaborative workshop process serve as a resource for the Board of Regents, the System office, and the campuses. The eleven strategic directions identified for the UCCSN are:

The UCCSN will enhance academic planning and integrate planning and budgeting efforts systemwide.

The UCCSN will emphasize undergraduate education and enhance the quality of undergraduate education.

The UCCSN will selectively develop graduate education systemwide which serves the needs of Nevadans.

The UCCSN will strive to enhance access to and retention in public postsecondary education.

The UCCSN will recognize and reflect the diversity of society within its institutions.

The UCCSN will emphasize and enhance collaborative programs within the System and between the System and other institutions and agencies.

The UCCSN will provide a leadership role to promote economic health and growth of the state through its educational, research, and service efforts.

The UCCSN will continue its commitment to evaluation and assessment to ensure accountability to the citizens of Nevada.

The UCCSN will strive to obtain additional resources and also to provide resource reallocation adequate to accomplish its plans and ensure that the resources are utilized to provide a maximum return on investment.

The UCCSN will recognize the importance of higher education in building common societal values and ethics, and will seek ways to promote and enhance this role.

The UCCSN will promote both basic and applied research that will meet the needs of the state, region, and nation.

Strategic Directions for the University and Community College System of Nevada

The University and Community College System of Nevada (UCCSN) faces many opportunities and challenges. As we enter the last decade of the twentieth century, several critical issues will shape the success and prosperity of the future of our state and nation. Higher education institutions increasingly are asked to play a greater role in preparing citizens for the many demands that must be faced in a rapidly changing society. In Nevada, as in the rest of the nation, community colleges and universities are key components in preparing students to become productive and contributing members of an ever more complex society, in preparing workers for the national and state workforce, in providing lifelong and continuing educational opportunities, in providing research that contributes to a growing and necessary base of knowledge, and to enhancing the social and cultural fabric of our communities.

The demands on higher education are large, the expectations great; the consequences of failure are disastrous. The very basis of our democratic society relies on education and requires that citizens have the opportunity to be educated and literate so that they can participate in our society in a meaningful manner. Likewise, for the society to prosper it will need the contributions of all its citizens. As knowledge and technology evolve and change, and as the demographics of the nation and the world economy change, this is no easy task. Current trends indicate that even as the demands on higher education increase, as expectations grow, resources dedicated to higher education are becoming more scarce. The scenario in Nevada is no exception.

Over the next biennium, Nevada's community colleges and universities will be expected to serve increasing numbers of students, a more diverse population of students, and increasing numbers of students who are underprepared for the college experience; all this with fewer resources. Like her sister states across the nation, Nevada is facing a declining share of state resources to support higher education. States are facing dual challenges; actual revenues have declined due to economic difficulties and demand for costly social services have increased. Education programs are in competition with other state programs for declining resources. In Nevada, higher education's share of the biennial budget declined from approximately 20% of the budget to less than 18%, at the same time that

"The mission of the UCCSN is to provide higher education services to the citizens of the state at a high level of quality consistent with the state's resources."

demand for higher education services continues to grow.

The issue of growth in student enrollments sets Nevada and the UCCSN apart from other states and other systems of higher education. Now serving in excess of 65,000 state-supported students, conservative estimates of growth based on adequate funding of higher education yield enrollment projections of over 100,000 students in state-supported programs by the year 2000. Growth will occur not only in the traditional sector of college-bound students, but from three other sources: from nontraditional students seeking skills necessary to maintain jobs in a workforce characterized by rapidly changing technology, from those seeking opportunities for lifelong learning, and from those adults seeking educational and vocational skills to enter or reenter the workforce. All these students—their strengths, weaknesses, and needs—will help shape higher education in Nevada over the next decade. In turn, our ability to incorporate them into the UCCSN and to meet their needs despite other challenges, will shape the future of our state and the nation.

Strategic Directions and Objectives

The mission of the UCCSN is to provide higher education services to the citizens of the state at a high level of quality consistent with the state's resources. In order to fulfill this mission it is imperative that the community that is the UCCSN embrace a shared vision for higher education and endorse common directions for reaching this vision. The Regents' Strategic Directions and Objectives define this vision.

At an annual workshop session, members of the UCCSN Board of Regents collaborated with campus presidents and vice presidents, faculty senate chairs, students, and the Chancellor and his staff to articulate a System vision and to provide a framework for common directions throughout the UCCSN. Eleven Strategic Directions were identified by the Board of Regents at their January 1994 workshop and will guide academic planning for the System over the next twelve months. Each direction is further defined and clarified by objectives that will aid the UCCSN in reaching its stated goals. While each Strategic Direction is important to the overall vision for the UCCSN, the Board has also adopted an agenda for action for 1994 based on its Strategic Directions. That agenda includes seven action items that will be completed this year.

These Strategic Directions are a key component in a dynamic planning process that will assist the Board in its efforts to provide a quality higher education program for the State of Nevada. While these Strategic Directions form an ambitious plan for the UCCSN—one which will surely take longer than one year to fulfill, and one which will require more resources than we now have—it would be shirking our responsibility to offer less to the students of this state.

SYSTEMWIDE PLANNING

Strategic Direction: ***THE UCCSN WILL ENHANCE ACADEMIC PLANNING AND INTEGRATE PLANNING AND BUDGETING EFFORTS SYSTEMWIDE.***

Objectives:

- The System will continue to refine and enhance the academic planning process.
- The System will review its budgeting process and will integrate budgeting and academic planning. This will ensure flexibility within the budget process to address campus needs as priorities are set.
- The Board will periodically enter into a dialogue with the campuses to review and reconcile the role and mission statements of its component parts: the universities, community colleges, DRI, and System office.
- The System will identify priorities for its management information systems, including the student information system, assessment data, and statewide demographic data—and will strive to improve data availability and compatibility for planning.
- The System will consider developing a Total Quality Management program on a pilot basis.

UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

Strategic Direction: ***THE UCCSN WILL EMPHASIZE UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION AND ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION.***

Objectives:

- The System will emphasize and reward excellence in classroom teaching for all instructors—full time, part time, and teaching assistants—and will also reward academic advising.
- The System will review its policies concerning promotion and tenure to ensure that they convey a clear message of the importance of undergraduate teaching.
- The Board will assess and review the role of part-time faculty systemwide; this will include a review of full-time/part-time faculty ratios, policies in regard to part-time faculty, and methods of support of part-time faculty in an effort to improve the quality of the teaching experience for these faculty.
- The UCCSN will review existing staff development programs and

support services for faculty systemwide and will improve these programs and establish additional programs as needed.

- The UCCSN will recruit, retain, and reward quality faculty.
- The Board will review its salary goals and will strive to meet those goals.
- Based on the findings of the Faculty Workload Study, the System will review its policies concerning workloads.
- The System will investigate the opportunities available for university graduate students to participate on the community college campuses.
- The Board continues to endorse a commitment to maintain a core curriculum requirement for the universities and to maintain appropriate associate curricula for the community colleges.
- The Board urges the UCCSN campuses to consider curricular components that include separate critical thinking courses, critical thinking skills, as well as "learning to learn" components in courses across the curriculum, and where appropriate, should include a global perspective in curricula.
- The Board will encourage the incorporation of new instructional technology where appropriate and will continue to explore the establishment of nontraditional delivery systems.
- The UCCSN will seek to enhance the quality of campus life for all students. Advisement, placement, and retention support services will be reviewed and if necessary enhanced to ensure that students have access to basic skills and developmental programs that are needed.

GRADUATE EDUCATION

Strategic Direction: ***THE UCCSN WILL SELECTIVELY DEVELOP GRADUATE EDUCATION SYSTEMWIDE THAT SERVES THE NEEDS OF NEVADANS.***

Objectives:

- The System will develop graduate programs that enhance other graduate programs, enhance current undergraduate academic programs, and match community needs and institutional strengths.
- The System will link graduate programs to excellence in undergraduate programs and service to the citizens of Nevada.
- The UCCSN will emphasize quality experiences for graduate students that develop and encourage their teaching skills.
- The UCCSN will endeavor to improve the quality of the

graduate student experience and will seek ways to increase the support of graduate assistantships and fellowships.

- The UCCSN will develop strategies to link K-12, community colleges, and universities into a seamless pipeline for the training of the next generation of scientists and engineers.

ENHANCED ACCESS

Strategic Direction: ***THE UCCSN WILL STRIVE TO ENHANCE ACCESS TO AND RETENTION IN PUBLIC POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION.***

Objectives:

- The System will fully articulate the UCCSN with K-12 education, including providing widespread information on admission criteria and program offerings.

- The System will develop an outreach plan for students traditionally underrepresented in higher education, including disadvantaged students and first-generation college students.

- The UCCSN will consider establishing a systemwide intake process for students including a formal process of how students enter the institution, receive counseling and advisement, matriculate, and receive retention support services.

- The System will continue to support the development of transfer centers on the campuses that facilitate student transfer within the System.

- The UCCSN will improve financial aid opportunities for all students with special attention to part-time students, and will seek to move the State of Nevada to a median ranking among the other states in regard to available financial aid.

- The System will continue to explore the establishment of nontraditional delivery systems such as distance learning to reach populations not easily served by current campuses. The Board encourages the incorporation of new instructional technology where appropriate and encourages the support and training which this technology requires.

- The UCCSN will enhance system-level data collection related to access and retention.

- The UCCSN will assume a leadership role in supporting child care facilities and early childhood development programs.

- The Board will strive to fund the base budget that is primarily driven by student enrollment demand.

DIVERSITY

Strategic Direction: ***THE UCCSN WILL RECOGNIZE AND REFLECT THE DIVERSITY OF SOCIETY WITHIN ITS INSTITUTIONS.***

Objectives:

- The UCCSN will enhance the diversity of its students, faculty, and the curriculum.
- The System will identify groups who are underrepresented and will set goals for appropriate representation.
- The UCCSN will encourage access for underrepresented groups and will strive to create an environment that supports women and ethnic minorities on the campuses.
- The System will encourage programs and policies that promote multi-culturalism.
- The System will explore an incentive plan for the recruitment and retention of women and ethnic minority faculty.

COLLABORATIVE PROGRAMS

Strategic Direction: ***THE UCCSN WILL EMPHASIZE AND ENHANCE COLLABORATIVE PROGRAMS WITHIN THE SYSTEM AND BETWEEN THE SYSTEM AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS AND AGENCIES.***

Objectives:

- The System will assess current collaborative efforts on the campuses and among the campuses and will endorse and enhance these efforts, particularly those that involve articulation and articulation agreements for courses and programs, transfer centers, and university centers.
- The System will develop additional collaborative programs between UNR and UNLV and between the universities and the DRI.
- The System will encourage collaboration among the System units for the purpose of responding to research opportunities.
- The System will explore establishing "partner schools" programs with middle schools, high schools, and other colleges.
- The System will encourage and establish 2+2, 2+2+2, and tech-prep programs.
- The System will encourage and develop collaborative programs with other states, such as those offered through WICHE.

ECONOMIC GROWTH

Strategic Direction: ***THE UCCSN WILL PROVIDE A LEADERSHIP ROLE TO PROMOTE ECONOMIC HEALTH AND GROWTH OF THE STATE THROUGH ITS EDUCATIONAL, RESEARCH, AND SERVICE EFFORTS.***

Objectives:

- The Board will sponsor a workshop session to explore and develop its proper role in economic development.
- The UCCSN will help to create an environment that is healthy for future economic diversity.
- The UCCSN will identify and meet the needs of workforce training in Nevada. Through programs such as business and industry centers, cooperative extension programs, continuing education, contract education, internships, practicums, and cooperative education, the system will provide means for a skilled workforce and workplace.
- Members of the System will meet with business and industry leaders and build joint educational programs.
- The System will identify applied and basic research needs in Nevada and will use these needs as a guide to developing graduate programs.
- The UCCSN will assess its impact on the economic health and quality of life in Nevada based on the themes of economic development, workforce training, educated citizenry, and cultural impact. The System will use this assessment to provide information on the impact of the UCCSN to state and community leaders and the general public.

EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT

Strategic Direction: ***THE UCCSN WILL CONTINUE ITS COMMITMENT TO EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT TO ENSURE ACCOUNTABILITY TO THE CITIZENS OF NEVADA.***

Objectives:

- The System will enhance its management information system to provide assessment data.
- The UCCSN will implement needed changes based on assessments.

RESOURCES

Strategic Direction: ***THE UCCSN WILL STRIVE TO OBTAIN ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND ALSO TO PROVIDE RESOURCE REALLOCATION ADEQUATE TO ACCOMPLISH ITS PLANS AND ENSURE THAT THE RESOURCES ARE UTILIZED TO PROVIDE A MAXIMUM RETURN ON INVESTMENT.***

Objectives:

- The System will review its current budgeting process and will integrate its planning and budgeting efforts.
- The System will review its current funding formulas and consider refining and expanding formulas where appropriate.
- The system resolves to seek funding for all institutions at the full-time faculty rate, allowing each campus the flexibility of utilization of these positions.
- The UCCSN will articulate the value of postsecondary education to the citizens of the state and seek constituent involvement of citizens and business and political leaders to support the adequate funding of higher education.
- The UCCSN will present the legislature with what we aspire to be (nationally and regionally competitive), what it takes to achieve this, and how much it costs.
- The UCCSN will seek access to federal funding programs and alternatives to state funding.
- The UCCSN will seek creative ways to leverage resources, including partnerships with industry and others.

VALUES AND ETHICS

Strategic Direction: ***THE UCCSN WILL RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN BUILDING COMMON SOCIETAL VALUES AND ETHICS, AND WILL SEEK WAYS TO PROMOTE AND ENHANCE THIS ROLE.***

Objectives:

- The Board will hold a System workshop to explore the issue of ethics and higher education and to help establish the direction we wish to take regarding this goal.
- The Board encourages the campuses to develop undergraduate curricula and cocurricular programs that assist students in acquiring an understanding of

and responsibility regarding social ethics, values, and democratic responsibilities.

- The UCCSN will study the feasibility of establishing a systemwide ethics institute.

Strategic Direction: ***THE UCCSN WILL PROMOTE BOTH BASIC AND APPLIED RESEARCH THAT WILL MEET THE NEEDS OF THE STATE, REGION, AND NATION.***

Objectives:

- The UCCSN will encourage strong relationships among research/scholarship, teaching, and service.
- The UCCSN will clearly articulate and explain the financial benefits of research on the state's economy and the key role that its research institutions play in the process of economic diversification and development.
- The UCCSN will pursue resources to stimulate research/scholarship. The UCCSN will seek adequate state funding for equipment, services, and buildings to support the continued growth of research/scholarship.
- The UCCSN will encourage its institutions to review policies and practices, as necessary, to accommodate and encourage faculty participation in research/scholarship.
- The UCCSN will support both graduate and undergraduate student research/scholarship and will communicate the importance of research and scholarship to both graduate and undergraduate education.
- The UCCSN will encourage the hiring and support of women and minorities who can develop strong research/scholarship programs and who can provide role models for women and minority students who might wish to pursue research careers.
- The UCCSN will support interdisciplinary and inter-institutional research/scholarship. The UCCSN will foster campus environments where faculty and students are encouraged to collaborate across traditional campus, college, school, and departmental lines.

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UNIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM OF NEVADA

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